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EC dialogue with parties starts today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The EC is set to begin its electoral dialogues with registered political parties today. On the opening day, the commission will hold meetings with 12 political parties, said EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed yesterday.

"We will discuss the changes made to the RPO and the code of conduct, and seek their cooperation for a fair election," he said.

The parties invited to morning session are Liberal Democratic Party, Bangladesh Congress, Bangladesh Muslim League, National People's Party, Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan, and Jamiyate Ulamaye Islam Bangladesh.

CPB, JSD, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesher Biplobi Workers Party, Bangladesh Nationalist Front, and Bangladesher Nationalist Movement will join the afternoon session.

Probe into graft allegations against 2 advisers' aides stalls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigation into corruption allegations against the former APS and PO of two government advisers appears to have stalled.

The Anti Corruption Commission initiated the probe seven months ago against Moazzem Hossain, former assistant personal secretary (APS) to Local Government Adviser Asif Mahmud, and Tuhin Farabi, former personal officer (PO) to Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum.

However, no visible progress has been made.

Despite initial findings suggesting bribery over transfers, tender manipulation, commission-taking in

We are not under any pressure... The investigation into the APS and PO of two advisers is ongoing. If evidence of corruption is found, legal action will be taken.

AKHTARUL ISLAM, ACC Deputy Director

procurement, and abuse of power, the inquiry remains stuck at the investigation stage and the commission has failed to file any cases, according to ACC sources.

Several senior ACC officials said "pressure" from influential quarters has slowed down the process. They also said visible progress is unlikely before the upcoming national elections in February.

If the involvement of advisers in the investigation comes up, it will be an embarrassment for the interim government. Therefore, the final report may come after its tenure ends, they added.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



Children row a boat across the marshland in Manoharpur village of Pirojpur's Nazirpur upazila to reach their school. With no road access, they depend on boats year-round, risking their safety to continue their education. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: KM HABIBUR RAHMAN

Prescription for power

Physicians emerge as one of the largest professional blocs running for polls

TUHIN SHUBHIRA ADHIKARY

With about three dozen doctors set to contest the upcoming national election, doctors are emerging as one of the largest professional groups vying for seats in parliament.

Jamaat-e-Islami has nominated the highest number, with 17 physicians, including party chief Shafiqur Rahman and key deputy Syed Abdullah Md Taher.

BNP has nominated 12 doctors for the February elections, with several others expected to join the race from parties like the National Citizen Party and the Communist Party of Bangladesh.

Most of the doctor candidates belong to associations aligned with their respective parties. Top leaders of these associations had received nominations in previous elections,

but this time, the number of physician nominees is much higher.

During the previous regime, the Awami League-backed Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad (Swachip) dominated the health sector, with several leaders contesting elections on party tickets.

After the fall of the AL government in August last year, the BNP-backed Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) and the Jamaat-backed National Doctors Forum (NDF) began dominating the sector.

There is also the left-leaning "Doctors for Health and Environment".

BNP announced a list of 237 possible nominees on November 3. The following day, DAB issued a press release congratulating 11 members for being selected and asked other members to support them.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



PROBABLE DOCTOR NOMINEES

JAMAAT: 17 CPB: 3

BNP: 12 NCP: 2

Children's rights should remain above all politics

Speakers tell
Unicef event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties must ensure that children are never used as tools in protests or politics, said speakers at an event yesterday.

They called for the protection of children's rights to remain a priority above all political divisions.

Rana Flowers, Unicef representative to Bangladesh, said Unicef had recently held discussions with young people, political parties, and trade unions, all of whom echoed a shared call for zero tolerance towards violence against children.

The programme showcased the progress of Unicef's "Fostering Rights and Empowerment of the Most Marginalised Adolescents and Children with Disabilities" initiative (2021-2025).

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



PROBABLE DOCTOR NOMINEES

JAMAAT: 17 CPB: 3

BNP: 12 NCP: 2

Taps run dry in Purba Jurain
3,000 households left without water supply

HELEMUL ALAM

Residents of several parts of Jurain have been enduring an acute water crisis for the past four days, as a Wasa pump failure has halted water supply through its pipelines.

"There has been absolutely no water for the last four days. The affected areas include the eastern part of Purba Jurain -- Haji Sardar Road, Rishipara (near Mistir Dokan), Kusumbagh, and surrounding areas," said Mizanur Rahman, a local resident.

He claimed that more than three thousand households have been left without water entirely.

In other areas, water supply has been intermittent, and the little that has come through is dirty and contaminated -- almost like drain water. This issue has primarily affected residents around Road 1, Dargabari, Niyamat Mosque Road, and the entire neighbourhood is suffering."

Contacted, a Wasa official said the work in the area had been completed, but it would take a while for water pressure to return.

"When the lines are empty for two or three days, it takes time for the pressure to build up. The connection work was completed on Tuesday night. Some improvement has already started -- we are getting phone calls from people saying they're getting water, and we hope the problem will be completely resolved soon," he said.

this month. Initially, many residents did not realise the severity, as they still had water stored in their reserve tanks.

She said all the mosques in the area have set up water tanks, and large crowds gather daily to collect water for drinking, cooking, and washing. "But not a single Wasa water truck has come to supply water. The situation in our area is really bad," she remarked. "I even submitted a written complaint to the Wasa executive engineer, with signatures from 50 homeowners."

Abul Bashar, a resident of the Mistir Dokan area in Jurain, said, "We've been buying drinking water from the mosque's deep tube well. That's how we've been managing for the past couple of days. The entire neighbourhood is suffering."

Contacted, a Wasa official said the work in the area had been completed, but it would take a while for water pressure to return.

"When the lines are empty for two or three days, it takes time for the pressure to build up. The connection work was completed on Tuesday night. Some improvement has already started -- we are getting phone calls from people saying they're getting water, and we hope the problem will be completely resolved soon," he said.



Crowds gather daily at mosques in Jurain to collect water for drinking, cooking, and washing as a Wasa pump failure has halted supply through its pipelines in several parts of the area for the past four days. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



COURT CORNER

Ex-mayor Ivy to remain in jail
SC stays HC bail order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



The Supreme Court chamber judge yesterday stayed the High Court verdict that granted bail to former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor Selina Hayat Ivy in five separate cases.

Justice Md Rezaul Haque, chamber judge of the Appellate Division, passed the order following five petitions filed by the state seeking a stay on the bail order.

He also sent the petitions to its full bench for the hearing on November 17.

Following the SC chamber judge's orders, Ivy cannot be released from jail, said lawyer Md Motaher Hossain Sazu.

BAGERHAT, GAZIPUR JS SEATS
SC chamber judge upholds HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court chamber judge yesterday upheld for a time being a High Court verdict that declared illegal the Election Commission's gazette notification which reduced the number of parliamentary seats in Bagerhat from four to three and increased the number of seats of Gazipur from five to six.

Justice Md Rezaul Haque, chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, passed the order. He also sent the EC's petition to its full bench for hearing on November 16.

On November 10, the HC declared the EC's gazette illegal and ordered restoration of the districts' previous constituencies.

Preserve all DU playgrounds: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities concerned to properly preserve and protect all the playgrounds of Dhaka University.

Delivering verdict on a petition, the court observed that the sports ground is vital for the students. DU has a legal obligation to preserve all its playgrounds.

The HC bench of Justice Md Shohrawardi and Justice Dihider Masum Kabir delivered the verdict following a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) in 2012 seeking directives.

At that time, construction materials were kept at the central playground of DU.